



Inclusive Marketing and Advertising for Period Products

2022

INTRODUCTION

The intentions of the IDP:

The Inclusive Design Program (IDP) is a web platform encouraging design students from all disciplines around Australia to practice inclusive design through the acknowledgment and understanding of intersectionality and empathy. Be it nationality, gender, age and religion, disabilities, ethnicity, socio economic status and geographic location, the key objective of the IDP is to propose briefs to you that address problems of inequities in our society. The IDP does this through connecting you with industry, community and other academic institutions through online resources, recordings, and live workshops. These will expose the students to user-centred design and research methods and directly engage them with diverse users.

The problem that needs to be addressed by answering this brief:

In this semester-long project, you will be asked to bring your design expertise to a real-world project. The IDP in 2022 is addressing the stigma around periods, especially for those in the LGBTQIA+ community. Your challenge is to explore and understand issues of inequity and stigma facing your potential users. By going through a human-centred design (HCD) process, you will come to discover, define, develop, and deliver - identifying unique opportunities to respond to with a physical or digital marketing/advertising campaign and/or strategy.

The stigma associated with menstruation:

Menstruation is a taboo topic and periods are often the butt of jokes. This has come about because periods are often depicted or talked about in advertising, schools and popular culture as a painful inconvenience that should be kept a secret (Connory, 2021). This is a problem because it results in periods (and those who experience them) feeling shame about a normal bodily function. Shame, silence, and stigma can prevent people from getting the period products, information, support, or medical help they need (Hawkey, Ussher, Perz & Metusela, 2017; Lansbury & King 2021; Sear, 2009). Stigma about menstruation is often experienced to a greater degree by those from marginalised groups such as the LGBTQIA+ community, people from diverse backgrounds, or those with a low socio-economic status (a person may fall in one or more of those categories, this is known as intersectionality). Stigma is threat to gender equity as without the right support, the education, employment, and wellbeing of menstruators can be negatively affected.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What is de-gendering and what is the problem with under-representation and misrepresentation in the LGBTQIA+ community?

Degendering seeks to dismantle the effects of gender through removing gendered visual signifiers and/or language to avoid perpetuating socially constructed gendered distinctions (Lorber, 2005). This works towards a long-term goal of doing away with binary gender divisions. Although LGBTQIA+ consumers are widely considered to be a (lucrative) target segment for marketers, the community remains under-represented and misrepresented in marketing. The former renders LGBTQIA+ identities culturally invisible, whilst the latter leads to the perpetuation of narrow or stereotypical representations of identities and lived experiences. Positive and diverse representations in powerful cultural vehicles like marketing are critical to ensure self-affirmation and intersectional justice. After all, you can't be what you can't see.

What are our supporting brands doing in this space?

You will be given the opportunity to work directly with LGBTQIA+ Health Australia, prominent brands like Cottons and Modi Bodi and noteworthy advocates in the area of period pride like Share the Dignity and the Chalice Foundation—who will offer you a deep understanding of the market segment and most importantly the users. These brands are leading the way in challenging both the stigma surrounding menstruation as well as who is represented in period marketing, specifically broadening this to include transgender, nonbinary and gender queer individuals.

Case studies:

Always ['#Likeagirl'](#) campaign

Bodyform/Libresse/Libra ['Bloodnormal'](#)

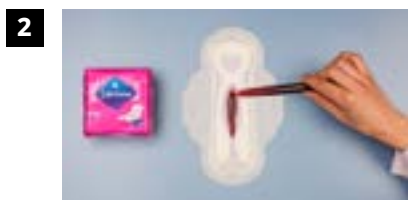
PROJECT SUMMARY

Utilising human-centred design (HCD) principles and processes, you will respond to aspects of inequality in menstruation with a physical and/or digital product. These artefacts will act as a point of discussion and provocation for positive outcomes and change. IDP aims to promote empathy by engaging students and organisations with practical projects that support collaboration, consultation, and inclusivity.

PROJECT DETAILS/SCOPE

Challenges:

How might you address issues of shame and inequity with menstruation and period products through marketing? Every person has a different story and comes from a different context in the LGBTQIA+ community. What is significant, valued, and intentioned varies across users. The challenge, then, is not to find the one solution that fixes all problems but consider a campaign and/or marketing strategy that addresses an aspect of the problem based on your research into the users that provokes discussion and seeks positive change.



1 #Likeagirl campaign by Always
2 Bloodnormal campaign by Bodyform/
Libresse/Libra

Deliverables:

An advertising campaign and/or marketing strategy document (digital and/or physical) that addresses issues raised throughout a human-centred design process. While you are tasked to create an artefact, this can range from the practical to more speculative. You can explore your message as a single campaign, service, or even provocation. It is up to you to identify how you want to address such issues.

Timeline:

This project can be run from 4 weeks, through a whole semester or a yearlong. It is up to you. You can follow a human-centred design process that follows a double diamond methodology approach popularised by the British Design Council. A suggested schedule for different timelines is at the end of this document.

DISCOVER

Weeks 1-4: The first diamond helps people understand, rather than simply assume, what the problem is. It involves speaking to and spending time with people who are affected by the issues. What already exists, and how can you learn from it?

DEFINE

Weeks 5-7: The insight gathered from the discovery phase can help you to define the challenge in a unique way. What challenges have gone unaddressed?

DEVELOP

Weeks 8-10: The second diamond encourages people to give different answers to the clearly defined problem, seeking inspiration from elsewhere and co-designing with a range of different people. How might you ideate, test, evaluate, and iterate with others?

DELIVER

Weeks: 11-13: Delivery involves improving concepts, detailing, and refining your outcomes. How might you communicate effectively across stakeholders?

SUBMISSION

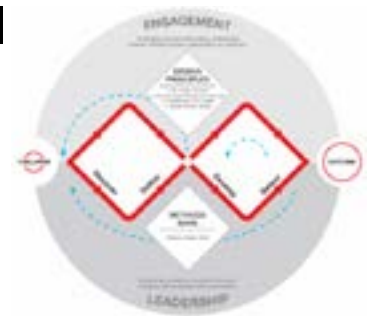
To upload your work and exhibit your inclusive designs you will first need to create an account on the IDP website. You can continue to log into your account to make changes until the point where you submit. You and your lecturer must read the 'explanatory statement' before pressing accept and begin your submission. Your submission must include a focused research question, your research findings, and a brief explanation of your project. For designed outcomes, you may upload up to five high-quality jpeg images that best demonstrate your work. You should also upload a written pdf document if you'd like to compliment your images with further written research or an additional rationale. If your submission is research or strategy based and best communicated as a written document or proposal you can upload this work as a pdf. Save and reread your submission for mistakes or inconsistencies. Once you press submit you CAN NOT make any more changes. Detailed information about submissions is outlined on the IDP website:

www.inclusivedesignprogram.com.au

CONCLUSION

Your challenge is to design a physical or digital marketing/advertising campaign and/or strategy that addresses the issues of inequity discovered and explored through the human-centred design process. In doing so, you will come to

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3 British Design Council Double Diamond Design Process

understand an inclusive design approach for addressing issues raised in your creative practice.

REFERENCES

Connory, Jane, (2021), Friday essay: I looked at 100 ads for menstrual products spanning 100 years — shame and secrecy prevailed. *The Conversation*.

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ETHICS APPROVAL

This project has been approved by or on behalf of Swinburne's Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) in line with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this project, you can contact:

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